



Gifted and Talented Program Review
West St. Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan Area Schools
School District 197

Prepared by
Cari Jo Kiffmeyer
Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Theresa Campbell
Gifted and Talented and Instructional Programs Coordinator

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The Curriculum Review Process

Curriculum in School District 197 is reviewed using a six-year cycle of continuous improvement. This process was adopted in the spring of the 2012-13 school year and includes professional development for teachers that is focused on the creation of digital curriculum and the adoption of innovative instructional practices.

In years 1-3, participating curriculum areas are considered to be in "formal review". In year one a content area team of teachers conducts an in-depth study of the current program to determine its overall effectiveness. Community and staff input is gathered and the team of teachers examines current best practice in curriculum and instruction. Based on the results of the study, the team, with assistance from the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC), identifies strengths and needs of the existing program, creates a vision for future programming and develops Outcomes that Matter to All and Core Beliefs.

During year two, content area teams review the current scope and sequence of the curriculum for grades K-12 and assess how it aligns to state and/or national standards and benchmarks. They then create a district curriculum framework/map that identifies the knowledge, skills, and learning targets that students need to know, be able to do, and act upon. Content area teams also select the materials (paper and electronic) needed to implement the revised curriculum and work to ensure the new curriculum and materials are culturally sensitive and non-discriminatory. If applicable or needed in year two, teams will develop digital curriculum for their content area. Teams also plan professional development activities to ensure proper training and support is provided relative to the new curriculum.

During year three, each curriculum area moves to the implementation phase where teachers look at the curriculum as taught, identify holes, design common assessments and begin to review data. The content area team also recommends grouping strategies, identifies how to accelerate or remediate students, and addresses issues relating to students with special needs (ELL and special education). Additionally, in the spring of year three, the content area team will meet to determine if the intended scope and sequence is achievable and identify areas for additional professional development.

Year four of the curriculum review cycle focuses on measurement and ensuring curriculum is being implemented as intended. Staff will pay careful attention to how well students are responding to the new curriculum and ensure that teachers' and parents' questions are answered. Common assessments continue to be reviewed and refined.

During year five, the revising phase, teams adjust implementation procedures and implement changes as needed. The curriculum is evaluated in terms of how well it is working and where modifications need to be made. Common assessments continue to be reviewed and refined.

In the refining phase, year six, teams continue to refine the curriculum. They determine if adjustments are needed and implement them accordingly. Common assessments continue to be reviewed and refined.

Summary of Year One: Gifted and Talented

In keeping with the curriculum review schedule and in support of Strategic Framework Strategy Goal A2, a review of the district's Gifted and Talented (GT) curriculum began in January 2014. A planning team of K-12 classroom and GT teachers, district administrators, and parents was assembled to evaluate the program as part of year one of the curriculum review process. The team gathered input and feedback from community and staff at six principal meetings, four Review Planning Team meetings, two Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee (GTAC) meetings and a Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting. Additional feedback was solicited through a survey of parents, students and staff, as well as a student focus group at Henry Sibley High School. The feedback gathered during the meetings, survey and focus group was very valuable and the planning team often referenced it when developing the Outcomes that Matter to All, Core Beliefs and SWOT Analysis for GT.

A critical aspect of the review process for GT was the analysis of program data. The planning team analyzed the way in which students are identified for the GT program, as well as how GT students are performing academically within the current programming model. This analysis revealed some trouble spots in the identification process. For example, the planning team found that some of the students who were identified for GT based solely on their CogAT score were not scoring in the 96th percentile or higher on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). This suggests that students are underachieving in comparison to their ability level as measured by the CogAT. Refinement of the identification process is also needed so that additional items can be taken into consideration including tests over time, student portfolios, varieties of giftedness, enrichment in multiple areas of interests and skills (arts, theater, etc.), teacher referrals (knowing the student), ethnicity and language. Finally, consistent testing procedures are needed that allow students who are new to the district and those recommended for retesting to be administered the CogAT beyond second grade.

The data analysis also revealed areas for improved communication. For example, it would be easier to communicate CogAT results to second grade families if the testing was moved prior to February so that teachers could share the results at conferences.

Lastly, the data review process showed that the makeup of the GT population does not reflect the demographics of the district.

We discovered some other areas for consideration in year one of the review process. At the elementary level, analysis shows the district needs to consider how it groups students in classes and what services are provided in the regular classroom as well as through pullout classes. Additionally, the district needs to assure creation of a consistent service model with supporting FTE. Currently the FTE allocation at the elementary level does not take into account the number of newly identified students each year.

At the middle school level the district not only needs to create a consistent service model, but it should provide programming in all four core areas (reading, math, science, and social studies). Further analysis of the math acceleration option that addresses compacting of curriculum versus skipping an entire grade level is also necessary. We will continue to make considerations for the way in which students are clustered, professional development for teachers serving GT students and for supplemental curriculum resources at the middle school level.

At the high school level, further training is needed for teachers around differentiation and further support and opportunities are needed for GT students in the areas of leadership, interests and strengths and coping skills.

As the GT planning team enters year two of the curriculum review process, it will look to formulate recommendations for programming and work to ensure alignment of the program and curriculum to the National Association for Gifted Children standards.

Gifted and Talented Review Team

GT Teachers

Jenny Parker - Garlough Elementary
Jenny Regan - Pilot Knob Elementary
Shannon Lawson - Somerset Elementary
Megan Mogelson - Moreland Elementary and Mendota Elementary
Crystal Mielke - Friendly Hills Middle School

Classroom Teachers

Emily Howard - Somerset Elementary
Erin Schmidt - Heritage Middle School
Jenn Reichel - Friendly Hills Middle School
Heidi Saari - Heritage Middle School
Rachel Cafferty - Heritage Middle School
Jessica Deegan - Heritage Middle School
Hope Alger - Friendly Hills Middle School
Sarah Lund - Sibley High School
Jen Nippert - Sibley High School

Additional Staff

Margaret Nigro - Sibley Counselor

Parents

David Carr - Elementary representative
Jo Schifsky - Secondary representative

Administration

Sue Powell - Garlough Elementary Principal
Chris Hiti - Heritage Principal
Joni Hagebock - Friendly Hills Principal
Tom Orth - Sibley High School AP
Theresa Campbell - Gifted and Talented and Instructional Programs Coordinator
Cari Jo Kiffmeyer - Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Mission (Our Core Purpose)

School District 197 provides a challenging educational environment that instills in each student a lifelong passion for learning, empowers all students to achieve their personal goals and academic potential, and prepares them to be responsible citizens in an interconnected world.

When our work aligns with our Core Purpose, we produce Outcomes That Matter To All, such as:

Programming

Gifted and Talented students that represent diverse backgrounds and reflect the total student population in the district participate in a variety of evidence-based regular and gifted education programming options and services that:

- provide a variety of high quality resources and materials
- include clear policies and procedures
- provide for their advanced learning needs
- enhance performance in cognitive and affective areas
- develop their potential
- include education for families and community to support Gifted and Talented students' needs.

Academic

Gifted and Talented students develop competence in interpersonal communication, demonstrating advanced oral and written skills, balanced multi-literacy, and creative expression as well as fluency with technologies that support effective communication.

Gifted and Talented students become independent investigators to challenge themselves.

Social Emotional

Gifted and Talented students demonstrate growth in personal competence and dispositions for exceptional academic and creative productivity, including self-awareness, self-advocacy, self-efficacy, confidence, motivation, resilience, independence, curiosity, and risk taking.

Gifted and Talented students demonstrate personal and social responsibility and leadership skills.

Gifted and Talented students develop social competency displayed in positive peer relationships and social interactions, demonstrating understanding of and respect for similarities and differences between themselves and their peer group and others in the general population.

Gifted and Talented students possess a developmentally appropriate understanding of how they learn and grow; they recognize the influences of their beliefs, traditions, and values on their learning and behavior.

The District 197 core beliefs for Gifted and Talented education that drive our words and actions are:

- We believe Gifted and Talented students should have access to multiple programs providing exposure to new challenges that encourage them to take risks.
- We believe Gifted and Talented students deserve to learn new things and should be challenged appropriately in a warm and inviting environment, resulting in a high level of performance/ achievement.
- We believe our Gifted and Talented students should reflect our diverse student population and there should be multiple methods to identify giftedness.
- We believe there are different ways to be Gifted and Talented; it is not only a number on a test.
- We believe social/emotional curriculum should be part of Gifted and Talented education; students need to work collaboratively and communicate effectively with their peers.
- We believe the needs of twice exceptional students (intellectually gifted children who have some form of disability) must be met.
- We believe there is a difference between Gifted and Talented students and high achieving students.
- We believe all Gifted and Talented students should have access to teachers trained in differentiation (providing different students with different avenues to education), appropriate resources, and time necessary to meet their individual needs.
- We believe Gifted and Talented students should have access to quality instruction, no matter what school in the district they attend.
- We believe Gifted and Talented programming should be a collaboration of educators, students, and parents in an effort to educate families on the opportunities and curriculum available.

Elementary SWOT Analysis

| | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <p><u>Perception</u> (Survey)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents supportive of the program Parents feel their kids are being challenged and have opportunities in and outside of school Teachers feel like they have differentiation training Different models of GT programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff knowledge about out of school opportunities Teachers don't have time to focus on GT planning Despite classroom teacher perception; differentiation not happening in some classrooms Diverse students not adequately represented | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase communication about out of school resources and where to find resources online Utilize differentiation materials that teachers have worked on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families might leave Disengagement of students and families |
| <p><u>Academic Achievement</u> (Data Analysis including MAP and MCA test history for GT Identified students)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students meet MAP RIT cut score as "2 year college ready" TIER II slightly more diverse in population (3rd grade) More students meeting math goals than reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low number of students meeting MAP RIT cut score for "select college ready" Grade 2 testing schedule limits data for use in GT identification GT identified population predominantly white CogAT threshold utilized as single qualifier Talent not currently assessed GT programming does not account for differences in ability across various content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting target growth Raising reading goals for high potential learners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program being defined as only getting general education test scores up |

Elementary SWOT Analysis

| | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p><u>Programming and Instruction</u></p> <p>(Standards Analysis using the NAGC-National Association for Gifted Children-Gifted Programming Standards)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage GT students in identifying interests, strengths, and gifts Identify out-of-school enrichment opportunities GT curriculum provides for critical thinking, creativity, flexibility and allows kids to find their passion and work on leadership skills Create environments that support trust among diverse learners and model appreciation for diverse backgrounds Create a safe and welcoming climate for addressing social issues and understanding the social interaction needs of GT students Provide environments and opportunities for leadership skills Maintain high expectations for all GT students as evidenced in meaningful and challenging activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop intervention services for GT students who are underachieving and are now learning and developing their talents Provide opportunities for advanced development of languages Assess and provide instruction on social skills Provide feedback that focuses on effort, on evidence of potential to meet high standards, and on errors as learning opportunities Assist students in developing identities supportive of achievement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design interventions to develop cognitive and affective growth that are based on research and affective practices Collaborate with families in accessing resources to develop their child's talents Develop activities that match developmental level and culture-based learning needs Enable students to identify their preferred approaches to learning, accommodate these preferences, and expand them Model respect for individuals with diverse abilities, strengths, and goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District allocation of FTE Varying FTE, services and curriculums at the different schools Varying degrees of support for different enrichment opportunities (GEM, Odyssey, CML, Lego, Insect Fair, Geography Fair, Spelling Bee, Geography Bee) Time for collaboration and planning Training Resources |

Middle School SWOT Analysis

| | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <p><u>Perception</u> (Survey)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework rigor • Out of school enrichment opportunities • How student is identified • Resources for staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources available to parents and students • Regular communication with parents and students about GT program on site • Regular classroom rigor • Pull-out option for programming • Identification process/criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development opportunities • Differentiation implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time provided for GT classes • Training • Funding • Scheduling for classes • Disparity between buildings |
| <p><u>Academic Achievement</u> (Data Analysis including MAP and MCA test history for GT Identified students)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students meet MAP RIT cut score as “college ready” • All students proficient on MCA testing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of MAP growth • No correlation between MCA and CogAT results • MCA scores decline over 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades • Lack of diversity representation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment in reading - 6th grade plateau • Enrichment vs. Advancement in math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Time • Money • Scheduling issues • Programming |

Middle School SWOT Analysis

| | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <p><u>Programming and Instruction</u></p> <p>(Standards Analysis using the NAGC-National Association for Gifted Children-Gifted Programming Standards)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access available to advanced communication tools, including assistive technologies, and use of these tools for expressing higher-level thinking and creative productivity • Provide structured opportunities to collaborate with diverse peers on a common goal in a trusting and respectful environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage GT students in identifying interests, strengths, and gifts • Provide resources to enhance oral, written, and artistic forms or communication, recognizing students' cultural context | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design interventions to develop cognitive and affective growth that are based on research of effective practices • Develop specialized intervention services for GT students who are underachieving and are now learning and developing their talents • Develop practices and activities that match developmental level and culture-based learning needs and support achievement • Provide feedback that focuses on effort, on evidence of potential to meet high standards, and on errors as learning opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Training • Money |

High School SWOT Analysis

| | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p><u>Perception</u></p> <p>(Staff Survey and Focus Group interview with four 9th grade GT Identified students)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class offerings at Sibley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher knowledge of: • GT opportunities at MS • How students are identified • Who the GT students are at Sibley • Who to contact for assistance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further PD on differentiation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students being advanced too quickly |
| <p><u>Academic Achievement</u></p> <p>(Data Analysis including MAP and MCA test history for GT Identified students)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students score well | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of diversity • Representation from both Heritage and Friendly Hills • CogAT is a one-time opportunity • Identification process - what does it look like to be GT? • Intentionality of K-12 programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment opportunities for GT students in “regular” classes • Work with students on good “school habits” • Identification of more ethnically diverse students/students who did not attend district schools previously | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GT seems to be only in reading and math • Budget |

High School SWOT Analysis

| | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p><u>Programming and Instruction</u></p> <p>(Standards Analysis using the NAGC-National Association for Gifted Children-Gifted Programming Standards)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model respect for individuals with diverse abilities, strengths, and goals • Model appreciation for and sensitivity to students' diverse backgrounds and languages • Maintain high expectations for all GT students as evidenced in meaningful and challenging activities • Provide students with college and career guidance that is consistent with their strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop activities that match each student's developmental level and culture-based learning needs • Collaborate with families in accessing resources to develop their child's talents • Develop specialized intervention services for GT students who are underachieving • Design interventions, based on research, that address cognitive and affective growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable students to identify their preferred approaches to learning, accommodate these preferences, and expand them • Engage GT students in identifying interests, strengths, and gifts • Provide environments for developing many forms of leadership and leadership skills • Provide feedback that focuses on effort, on evidence of potential to meet high standards, and on errors as learning opportunities • Provide examples of positive coping skills and opportunities to apply them | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Funds • Training • Energy • Resources |

ISD 197 Curriculum Review Cycle

| | 2012 – 2013 | 2013 – 2014 | 2014 – 2015 | 2015 – 2016 | 2016 – 2017 | 2017 - 2018 | 2018-2019 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| State Action | Implementation of Language Arts | Implementation of Social Studies | | Revision in Math begins | | Revision in Science begins | |
| Year 1: Self Study | 5-12 Social Studies | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language | AVID PE AND Health Tech Ed FACS | K-12 Math Art Counseling | Music Business | K-12 Science | K-12 Language Arts |
| Year 2: Developing | 5-12 Social Studies | 5-12 Social Studies Chemistry Physics K-4 Social Studies | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language | AVID PE and Health Tech Ed FACS | K-12 Math Art Counseling | Music Business | K-12 Science |
| Year 3: Implementing | K-8 Language Arts MS Science | 5-12 Social Studies 9-12 Language Arts | K-4 Social Studies Chemistry Physics | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language | AVID PE and Health Tech Ed FACS | K-12 Math Art Counseling | Music Business |
| Year 4: Measuring | | K-8 Language Arts MS Science | 5-12 Social Studies 9-12 Language Arts | K-4 Social Studies Chemistry Physics | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language | AVID PE and Health Tech Ed FACS | K-12 Math Art Counseling |
| Year 5: Revising | | | K-8 Language Arts MS Science | 5-12 Social Studies 9-12 Language Arts | K-4 Social Studies Chemistry Physics | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language | AVID PE and Health Tech Ed FACS |
| Year 6: Refining | | | | K-8 Language Arts MS Science | 5-12 Social Studies 9-12 Language Arts | K-4 Social Studies Chemistry Physics | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language |
| Budget | 5-8 Science | 5-8 Social Studies 9-12 Language Arts | K-12 Social Studies Chemistry, Physics PLTW | ELA - Writing ESL Gifted and Talented World Language | AVID PE Health Tech Ed, FACS | K-12 Math Art Counseling | K-12 Science Music Business |